APPENDIX H

Correspondence with the National Marine Fisheries Service

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT, SACRAMENTO
CORPS OF ENGINEERS
1325 J STREET
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95814-2922

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

CLIENT Sac-ACOE
PROJECT 1801 - 029
FILE 5.

Environmental Resources Branch

JAN 10 2002

Mr. Mike Aceituno
Regional Administrator
National Marine Fisheries Service
Sacramento Area Office
650 Capitol Mall, Suite 8-300
Sacramento, California 95814-4706

Dear Mr. Aceituno:

This letter is to request an updated species list for the proposed Lower Cache Creek flood damage reduction study located in Yolo County, California. We are preparing the Feasibility Report (FR) and Environmental Impact Statement/ Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR) for the study and are considering two alternatives: a flood barrier north of the city of Woodland and a new setback levee along Cache Creek. The feasibility study is in response to the Federal Emergency Management Agency's recent mapping effort that now places Woodland and other areas in the Cache Creek flood plain. Current project levees along Cache Creek are inadequate to contain larger flood events beyond what has been recorded previously. As shown on the enclosed map, the study area begins at County Road 96B upstream on Cache Creek and ends at the settling basin downstream.

The flood barrier alternative would consist of a new berm constructed for a length of 6 miles in an east-west direction across agricultural land north of Woodland. In addition to the berm, this alternative would also require removal of 3,000 feet of the existing west levee and 4,000 feet of the training levee along the west edge of the settling basin. A concrete weir would be constructed in place of the degraded west levee. The flood barrier would prevent floodwaters from reaching Woodland and would still allow the settling basin to function as designed.

For the setback levee alternative, we are considering three variations, each of which would have some effect on Cache Creek where the six road crossings are located. The narrow setback variation requires the most rock armoring at the road crossings to allow the stream to carry flows beyond the current capacity. To minimize adverse effects on residences, outbuildings, and agricultural lands, the narrow setback levee also has the minimum setback of all three variations. The wide setback variation entails reduced rock armoring at road crossings to protect the bridges, but the setback would be farther away from the creek, would require more land, and would affect more structures. The third setback variation would necessitate extending the bridges where they cross Cache Creek.

Some in-stream rock riprap would still be required. The levee would be placed farther away from Cache Creek

than the minimum setback, but less than the maximum setback. Existing levees along the creek could be purposely breached in places to allow the greater floodflows to pass into the new areas between the setback levees and the stream.

While the previous paragraphs provide a brief description of the study alternatives, we also have a much more detailed description available for your information. We would like to establish informal coordination and invite your staff person assigned to this study to a field examination of the study area. Our intent is to release a draft FR and EIS/EIR for public review in the spring of 2002. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Patti Johnson, Environmental Manager, at (916) 557-6611 or e-mail at pjohnson@usace.spk.army.mil. We would appreciate a reply within 30 days of receipt of this letter. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Kenneth E. Hitch, P. E.
Chief, Planning Division

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Sacramento Area Office
650 Capitol Mall, Suite 8-300
Sacramento, California 95814-4706

January 25, 2002

In Reply Refer To:
SWR-02-SA-6155:EAC

Kenneth E. Hitch, P.E.
Chief, Planning Division
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
1325 J Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-2922

Dear Mr. Hitch:

This is in response to your letter of January 10, 2001, requesting a list of federally listed endangered or threatened species under the jurisdiction of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) that could occur in or near the site of the proposed Lower Cache Creek Flood Damage Reduction project (Yolo County). The project area extends from County Road 96B upstream on Cache Creek to the settling basin downstream. Our understanding is that the project may involve a flood barrier north of the City of Woodland or one of three variations of a setback levee.

Our data indicate that the following species may occur in the project area that are under our jurisdiction and are listed or candidates for listing under the federal Endangered Species Act:

Central Valley steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*)–threatened
Central Valley fall/late fall-run chinook salmon (*O. tshawytscha*)–candidate

In addition, **designated critical habitat** occurs within the proposed project area for **Central Valley steelhead.**

Finally, the proposed project area has been identified as **"essential fish habitat"** (EFH) in the amendment to the Pacific Salmon Fishery Management Plan, pursuant to the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. The species within the proposed project area which may require EFH consultation is **Central Valley fall-run chinook salmon.**

NMFS has reviewed the brief description of the project alternatives provided in your letter. In general, an alternative that has a large flood plain area with extensive riparian vegetation and minimizes channelization and the use of rip rap or concrete would be considered by NMFS as less likely to adversely affect steelhead and chinook salmon. We would be interested in reviewing the more detailed description mentioned in your letter, and to visit the project site.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Beth Campbell in our Sacramento Area Office, 650 Capitol Mall, Suite 8-300, Sacramento, CA 95814. Dr. Campbell may be reached by telephone at (916) 930-3611 or by Fax at (916) 930-3629.

Sincerely,

Michael E. Aceituno
Supervisor, Sacramento Area Office

cc: NMFS-PRD, Long Beach, CA
Stephen A. Meyer, ASAC, NMFS, Sacramento, CA